

## Annual Meeting

April 3, 2024

Board Members in Attendance: Dave Shipperbottom, Kate Holman, Mike Todd, Dane Todd, Matti Roinila, Shelly Tyser, Hillary Swain

Administration in Attendance: Spencer Peery, Eric Alexander, Michelle Bellamy

Members in Attendance: William Swain, Matt & Lisa Marquart, Chuck & Mary Murrietta, Drew Long, Rick Davis, Marty Bergeron, Robert Mackalski

Called to Order at 6pm

President's Welcome – Dave Shipperbottom

Director Introductions

Member Introductions

Financial Report 23/24 Fiscal Year – Spencer shared financial and membership updates.

Committee Reports

- A. By-Laws – We keep notes throughout the season and then do one By-Law change per season if necessary. Kate updated the group on By-Law changes that were included this season and the reasons for the changes. Kate is working on additional updates recommended by a member in March to be in place by the start of the 2024 season.
- B. Coaching – Matti is working on getting things more streamlined going forward, standardized age-appropriate practice plans for all levels.
- C. Concussion/Risk Management – Dane updated that we will not need to pre-screen players before the season. Our Concussion Doctor will attend the coaches meeting and go over everything with Coaches.
- D. Disciplinary – Dave reported that all disciplinary issues for the season have been resolved.
- E. Equipment – Matti reported that we are good on equipment for the upcoming season with the exception of replacing expired helmets and getting neck guards because of the new requirement starting in August.
- F. Girls Program – Nate is exploring ideas on collaborating with the Omaha Girl's Program.
- G. Goalies – Matti reported that we have a priority to find a Goalie Coach for the upcoming season. The Board is aware that this needs to be addressed.
- H. House – Shelly reported that we had 2 house teams per level this season including High School Club. We did host some of the end of the season House Tournament. And also hosted some of the MWAHA Select Tournament Games. We are trying to purchase 2 IPads this year for scorekeeping at each rink.
- I. Ice – Michelle reported that we just need more ice, as usual.
- J. LSHL – Season went well and numbers were up. Would like to add a 3<sup>rd</sup> division for next season.
- K. Lincoln Stars- Kate reported that we try to meet with them preseason, currently navigating changes with the Stars front office staff. We continued the Kid Captain program this season and LIHA benefitted from a Stars Jersey Auction. Post season meeting is scheduled for later in April.
- L. Marketing – Kate focused on Team Recognition, shared kid captain pictures, etc. We have not done any paid advertising to increase numbers because we don't have the ice. Looking forward to adding a Monthly E-Newsletter.
- M. MWAHA – Meeting will be in June, we have 3 representatives that attend the meeting.
- N. Officiating – Dave provided an update from Chris Hadfield, Lincoln Ref in Chief: Another successful season in the books! This year went really smoothly with no real issues to speak of...A survey was sent out to Lincoln

officials that officiated this season and the results of that survey were very favorable with all but 1 returning next season...This year we gained 6 new officials which really helped out with scheduling games...We also have 2 officials that will be joining us next year that went through the process only to be told by USA Hockey that they were too young based on new age requirements...we have one official that will be leaving us to be included in the USA Hockey ODP or Officials Development Program which is really big news...He will most likely spend a couple of years officiating in the USHL and other high quality leagues...Officials graduate from this program to move on to the ECHL, D1 and D2 college, and sometimes to the NHL so it's great we will have a representative from Lincoln...I hosted a Level 1, 2 USA Hockey officials required seminar this year and had a pretty large turnout with officials from both Lincoln and Omaha attending...I plan on hosting 2 next season, one for levels 1,2 and another for levels 3, 4...I also plan on trying to recruit officials this summer by hosting an introduction to officiating seminar in either June or July, more details to come on that...I want to thank coaches and parents for behaving themselves (for the most part)...Here's looking forward to another great season this fall!

- O. Program Expansion – Griffin reported that we had great numbers, anticipate filling 8 teams for 6U and 8 teams for 8U. He also included a list of needs for the additional numbers next season.
- P. Rules – No rule changes this season. As of August 1, 2024 neck guards will be required for all players under 18.
- Q. Safesport – Mike T reported that the Team Managers and Coaches did a great job communicating and coaches did a great job keeping track of things.
- R. Scholarships – Kate reported that this season we had 3 times the number of applications compared to previous seasons. The committee tried to give something to every qualified applicant.
- S. Team Managers – Shelley reported that we have them and appreciate them.
- T. Tournaments – Shelly reported that we hosted a 10U and 12U Travel tournament this past season as well as the Shamrock Showdown. Goal this season is to get Tournament information out earlier to get more teams (pending ice confirmation).
- U. Travel – Matti reported that we had relatively successful teams this season. Working on getting Coaches assigned so that we can get signed up for tournaments. Travel Tryout dates for 10U and older have been announced.
- V. Hockey Director – Overall Travel went well overall, had some issues at House with newer coaches. Working on providing better resources and communication going forward. Would also like to pair new coaches with seasoned coaches to aid in the development of newer coaches.

#### Questions/Comments from Members:

1. I have seen communication for 12U tryouts but have not seen anything regarding 8U tryouts. What is the plan for at least one Select team (preferably 2+ teams)?
  - a. The tryout information communicated so far was for the 10U, 12U, and 14U Travel teams. Select teams are part of the House program, so those evaluations occur after the start of the House season. 8U Select coaches will be interviewed and chosen in late April/early May. The number of Select teams at all levels will be determined based on registration numbers and skill demonstrated by registered players.
2. 8U parents would like kids to wear Jr. Stars jersey and keep them. Some have issues with having a corporate logo on the jersey instead of Jr. Stars.
  - a. The 8U Select team wears the Jr. Stars jerseys. 6U and 8U House teams wear corporate logo jerseys because their sponsorship makes the incredibly reduced registration pricing possible.
  - b. LIHA's goal is to continue to build the program and, based on skill, have an advanced team again.

3. The tax documents for the past two years indicate no charitable donations/gifts were received. Is that accurate? If so, please explain why. Like organizations across Nebraska have significant amounts reported in this field. Seems like an opportunity for growth. What is the boards strategic plan for this number to exist AND grow? c. Fundraising (on the org chart) is 'TBD' and has been for at least the past year. What is the plan to fill this? Is this a priority? d. What grants has the organization received (prior to the past two years) and for what amounts? Who manages the grants? e. 2022 indicated there was a +\$18K gain: Where were those funds allocated?
  - a. Spencer reported that donations have only recently ramped up in the last two years and have been in two buckets: donations earmarked for a specific team which do not hit the LIHA balance sheet, and corporate donations. Those were included with income and not reported correctly on the tax form, but will be going forward.
  - b. The Fundraising Director position was advertised during the 2023 board election, but no applications were received. The board worked together on the fundraising in the last year (sponsorships, jersey auction, Give to Lincoln Day), and Dane Todd will be chairing the Fundraising Committee in 2024. As soon as plans are ready they will be shared with the members.
  - c. LIHA has not received grant funding that current members are aware of.
  - d. Historically LIHA has fluctuated between a \$10,000ish loss and a \$10,000ish gain for the season. Funds are held in the general fund, as well as a money market account, and a CD.
4. Referees: Members brought up issues with reffing this past season. Had one game where the ref left during the game and only one referee was left on the ice during a High School Club game. Would like to see a 3-referee system at the high school level.
  - a. LIHA is planning a meeting with MWAHA and Omaha regarding referee issues.
5. Shamrock Showdown: Lincoln teams will be required to register for the tournament through SportsEngine. Rick would like to add verbiage/clarification to differentiate between advanced, intermediate, and beginner. Stars have offered to do a jersey auction with half proceeds to charity and half to LIHA.
6. Rick will share information on recertifying expired helmets.
  - a. Cost is almost or as much as buying new.
7. Travel team numbers are determined by Head Coach and Evaluation Committee.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

## LIHA Board Meeting Minutes

April 3, 2024

Board Members in Attendance: Kate Holman, Matti Roinila, Shelly Tyser, Mike Todd, Dave Shipperbottom, Dane Todd, Hillary Swain

Non-Board Members in Attendance: Eric Alexander, Spencer Peery, Michelle Bellamy

### Closed Board Meeting

Meeting called to order at 7:37 pm.

### Discussion/Feedback about Annual Meeting with Members

Everyone thought it went well. Happy with the participation.

### LIHA Meeting Minutes:

Dane made a motion to accept the March 4, 2024 minutes into record, Mike T., all in favor.

### Financials

Spencer reviewed the financials as of March 31, 2024.

Dane made a motion to accept the financials into record, Matti 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor.

Need to set up a Budget, Payment Plan and expectations for Select/Travel Teams.

#### 1. Officers & Committees

##### a. Bylaw-Required Officers

- i. President – Kate made a motion to appoint Dave, Shelly 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor.
- ii. Vice President - Dave made a motion to appoint Kate, Shelly 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor.
- iii. Secretary – Dave made a motion to appoint Nate, Kate 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor.
- iv. Treasurer – Dave made a motion to appoint Griffin, Dane 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor.

##### b. Bylaw-Required Positions

- i. Player Safety Coordinator Kate made a motion to appoint Dane, Matti 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor.
- ii. Registrar – Dave made a motion to appoint Bruce Hiller, Dane 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor.  
(Spencer in training).
- iii. Referee-in-Chief – Dave made a motion to appoint Chris Hadfield, Kate 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor.
- iv. Coaching Director – Kate made a motion to appoint Matti, Dane 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor.
- v. MWAHA Representative(s) – Dave made a motion to appoint Mike T, Eric and Nate, Dane 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor.
- vi. SafeSport Administrator – Dave made a motion to appoint Mike T., Kate 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor.

##### c. Other Positions

- i. House - Shelly
- ii. Program Expansion - Griffin
- iii. Officiating - Dave
- iv. Equipment – Griffin/Matti
- v. Marketing - Hillary
- vi. Fundraising – Dane & Mike (aka The Brothers Todd)
- vii. Team Managers – Shelly/Hillary
- viii. Ice – Dave/Michelle
- ix. Rules - Nate
- x. Tournaments – Shelly
- xi. Scholarships - Kate
- xii. Disciplinary - Dave
- xiii. Goalies - Matti
- xiv. Lincoln Senior Hockey League - Griffin

**d. Non-Bylaw Positions**

- i. Travel - Shelly
- ii. Select - Shelly
- iii. Girls Program - Nate
- iv. Lincoln Stars – Kate
- v. Bylaws - Kate

e. Anything Missing?

Non-Bylaw Position: High School Club/Select Liaison – Shelly is checking with Julie Thielen

5. Other Items

Matti will meet with coaches to go over Coaching Evaluation results.

6. Anonymous Contact Form (See below)

7. May Meeting

- a. 2024-2025 season planning – May 8<sup>th</sup> at 7pm at Lazlo’s South

#### Anonymous Contact Form Items with Responses:

1. We really appreciate the strides the board has made; being more proactive with getting tryout dates out early, trying to grow the program, and dealing with difficult situations that arise within the organization.

**Response:** Thank you!

2. We feel very blessed to have been able to experience the coaching that occurred for our child this year. The coaching staff very much instilled the core values of LIHA/USA Hockey. The coaching staff held the kids to a high standard and never wavered from the expectations and dealt with issues as they arose. These expectations were not only of the children but the parents also. We really appreciated the coaching evaluations that coaches provided our child, so we knew what skills needed to be worked on. Most of all we appreciated how they pushed our child to be better and expected him to work hard and at the same time were great at praising him and his team when there was evidence of growth. We really hope that the momentum that this year's coaching can be continued. Witnessing the amount of improvement that was made in one season was refreshing, but also concerns us that this will not continue as our child moves up. Our first year of travel was not an ideal situation for a competitive travel program. Though our child had fun and the team had successes, it was not a rewarding year in the sense that playing time was not earned, instead it was about making everyone happy and providing equal playing time no matter their effort or whether they even attended practices. In the FAQ of LIHAs website, there is a question in regard to level a child should play at (house of travel, and this is the answer... "You need to make the commitment to travel and to the extra practices. Another consideration is the skill/talent level of the player. Travel teams are more skilled and, as such, have tryouts to be selected. Additionally, equal playing time is not a factor at the Travel-team level. Play is based on effort, coachability, ability to be a team player, and attendance at practice." Wanting to compete on a Travel team is a large commitment for the child and their entire family. It is a time commitment and a financial commitment, that should not be taken lightly. When coaches do not have consistent rules, do not require attendance of practices and dry land in order to play, and do not reward for effort on a travel team, and instead just want to play everyone evenly, this makes the commitment difficult. Unfortunately, it also then has families questioning their commitment, and they begin looking at other organizations. We would ask that Board acknowledge the definition of what a travel team is. We would like to see a coach that is willing to push the children to improve, where skills are taught, and children are pushed to work hard and earn their playing time.

**Response:** Hockey Director and Coaching Director are already working on plans to set Coaching Expectations at the beginning of the season, they will be happy to field questions before or during the season.

3. We encourage the board to speak to parents of the upcoming 6u/8u children who would love the opportunity for their children to experience this level of competition at the 8u level, instead of just the house level, as some of our children have had the opportunity to do. The memories we have with our Hockey travel families will be some of the best memories our family will keep forever. Though we are personally not affected by this, it saddens us to hear that the young eager kids who are entering our hockey program have not been receiving the same travel experiences that our children have had the privilege to tryout and experience. It is wonderful to hear the number of kids trying hockey, and it is important to recognize that there will be several levels of ability to try to continue to grow, and embrace those who are wanting a more competitive environment.

**Response:** The skill level of the players will determine what level(s) we are able to have this fall.

4. We would love to continue to see LIHA encourage past players to help assist with coaching. We like that a non-parent coach is available to coach at the 14U level. We encourage LIHA to continue to help mentor these young coaches. Would there be a way that these young coaches be assigned to a mentor with LIHA, someone they know they can call if they need help to handle a situation? Maybe something for the Hockey Director to do?

**Response:** The coaches guide, coaches meeting and coaching mentor program will help with this moving forward.

5. Issues with how parents represent the organization. Parents calling games on team Facebook pages should not be screaming, using inappropriate language, and being vocal about refs. As an organization we need to determine how to make sure this does not continue on a page that represents LIHA.

**Response:** LIHA has addressed this with MWAHA and the behavior has to meet a certain level before we can file a complaint. We will add it to the Manager's handbook that whomever is streaming needs to keep it appropriate. Timely feedback of these issues from members during the season would also be helpful so the board can address them.

6. Recommendation that teams not participate in certain tournaments to ensure player safety.

**Response:** LIHA will give Coaches and Team Managers a suggested list of tournament locations that have worked out well in the past.

7. Can LIHA build a Girls program? It is sad to think that at the High School level, we will have to make the trip back and forth to Omaha because Lincoln has not fostered and grown the sport on the girls side of things. The Ice Box also needs to get dedicated girls locker room so they are not shoved into a Coach's office or a storage closet. Their locker room should be just as nice as the boys.

**Response:** LIHA is working on improving the number of girls participating in hockey and would like to see that happen once the numbers support it. Nationally the number of girls participating in hockey is declining. The Ice Box does have a dedicated girls locker room, we will bring up concerns to the Stars at the post season meeting in April.

8. Management of teams, selections of teams, tournament venues, teams selected for tournaments, boys with girls teams and not separated for better competition between the two, locker room settings for teams by genders and developing both gender hockey programs to shine more light on women's hockey. Coach and kid on same team issues and bias within. Practices, times for them and what is actually being taught at those practices ie no scrimmages or game developments throughout whole season. Sharks and minnows and the dangers that presents with so many kids skating so fast and the collisions that occur every time and kids being hurt. Coaches awareness of kids getting hurt also in practice and games not enough attention on them. Need more tournaments. Tournaments shouldn't be just whoever signs up. We pay for them and want to see kids that can at least skate participating in those and on those teams for tournaments. Management of whole age division and it being solely one of the parents. More bias within program allowed there too and I believe it is simply too much of a task and role for one individual and should be delegated to several for smoother operations throughout the season and with all the individual teams. Also not happy with the way the tournament and coaching choices were for the shamrock showdown. As well as the shady raffle and auction proceedings. Getting the run around from people and back and fourth and nobody knowing what's going on. I also want to state I had a kid crying in my arms almost an hour after tournament over this year out in the parking lot. He was benched for the last 7 mins of his last game with no answers or explanations from a coach that I know didn't want to continue being

there that Sunday and possible personal reasons in which he took out on a player who which had nothing to do with things. He cried heavily because he was taken out of the game and obviously extremely hurt by not being able to play to the end and not on his shift. Rough way for a coach to end a kids hockey season. I know they all look forward to that tournament all year and I hope there are changes next year as my sons a good player you have. We hope to keep him with the program if changes made or coaches that are leaders are reprimanded for negative actions on the kids that work so hard for them game after game. Snooty favoritism and the current management needs to stop. It's just 6 and 8u hockey and it hinders their futures in the sport in which they love playing.

**Response:** Member is invited to attend a future board meeting to discuss these items so we can more clearly understand and respond comprehensively.

Meeting adjourned at 9:31pm.